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# CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

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To: Planning Board  
From: Community Development Department (CDD) Staff  
Date: November 14, 2019  
Re: **Harvard Square Overlay District Zoning Petition**

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## Overview

This zoning petition by Suzanne P. Blier, et al., proposes several changes to the requirements of the Harvard Square Overlay District in Section 20.500. The stated intent of the proposed changes is to “gently increase density, reduce parking, increase housing viability, foster a balance between local and formula retail, and give renewed vibrancy to a retail destination that has been steadily declining.” The zoning petition stems from discussions by the Harvard Square Conservation District Study Committee, which has been meeting over the past couple of years at the convening of the Cambridge Historical Commission (CHC). The petition is also supported by members of the Harvard Square Business Association and Harvard Square Neighborhood Association.

The proposed changes fall into four overall topic areas:

### *Changes related to development review procedures*

- Revising the composition of the Harvard Square Advisory Committee and the conduct of its meetings. (Section 20.54.1)

### *Changes related to parking and loading requirements*

- Deleting the required payment for waiving required parking spaces when the Gross Floor Area (GFA) is the maximum allowed. (Section 20.54.4)

### *Changes related to height and density*

- Increasing the maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for residential uses in the Business B district from 3.0 to 4.0. (Section 20.54.6)
- Allowing further increases in FAR by Planning Board special permit. (new Section 20.54.7)
- Allowing GFA exemptions for ground floor retail establishments of 1,500 square feet or less. (new Section 20.54.8)

### *Changes related to retail and other ground-floor commercial establishments*

- Expanding the range of retail uses allowed as-of-right or by special permit in certain areas, subject to restrictions. (Sections 20.54.3 and 20.54.9)
- Limiting the street frontage allowed for banks, financial institutions, and cannabis retail stores. (new Section 20.54.9)

This memo provides background information relevant to these proposals and discusses some issues to be considered in the Board’s deliberations.

## **Harvard Square Overlay District**

### *Planning and Zoning Background*

The Harvard Square Overlay District (HSOD) was created in 1986 following a planning study that established development goals and guidelines for the area. As shown in the attached map, the HSOD encompasses several different base districts, which include higher-density business, office and residential districts within the core of Harvard Square as well as some moderate-density districts along the edges. As with all overlay zoning, the HSOD modifies the base zoning in specific ways to enable desired outcomes, providing more flexibility in some ways, and imposing additional limitations in others.

In 2000, another study of Harvard Square was completed with the ultimate outcome of establishing a Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD), within which building permits for new buildings or alterations to existing buildings are subject to review by the CHC. While the NCD is jurisdictionally separate from the Zoning Ordinance, the 2000 study considered some zoning issues and resulted in amendments to the HSOD provisions. The boundaries of the NCD and HSOD are nearly the same, with some variations (see attached map). The aforementioned Harvard Square Conservation District Study Committee is in the process of completing an update to the 2000 study, discussed further below.

The HSOD includes the following specific provisions and modifications to the base zoning. Most of the following provisions were included in the original zoning; provisions that were created in the 2000 zoning amendment are noted.

- Development consultation by a Harvard Square Advisory Committee consisting of community members with a specified range of backgrounds and expertise. (Section 20.54.1)
- Building heights limited to 60 feet as-of-right or 80 feet by special permit, except where the base zoning has a lower height limit. (Section 20.54.2)
- Allowances for limited retail, business, and consumer service uses in office or residential base zoning districts. (Section 20.54.3)
- Allowed waiver of parking and loading requirements for uses in existing buildings, or otherwise by special permit from the Planning Board, in some cases requiring a payment in lieu of parking to a Harvard Square Improvement Fund. (Section 20.54.4)
- Allowed waiver of required yard setbacks for existing buildings, or for new buildings by special permit from the Planning Board. (Section 20.54.5)
- Modifications to the FAR limits in various base districts. (Section 20.54.6, created in the 2000 amendment and summarized further in this memo)
- Some permitted variations from the signage requirements of Article 7.000. (Section 20.55.1, created in the 2000 amendment with the understanding that signage would be subject to NCD review procedures)

Development guidelines for Harvard Square were established in 1986 after the creation of the HSOD and updated in 2002 following the creation of the NCD. These guidelines, which are referenced both in the zoning and the NCD bylaws, are intended to help guide growth and change in the Harvard Square Overlay District, both as new buildings are constructed and as old buildings are adapted to accommodate new uses.

The HSOD is designated as an “Area of Special Planning Concern,” where development is subject to additional scrutiny. When the HSOD was adopted, few development projects were subject to review procedures. In the 1980s and 1990s, planning studies and special zoning resulted in the establishment of Areas of Special Planning Concern in which all projects above a certain size threshold would be subject to non-binding “Development Consultation” procedures. Harvard Square and Central Square have standing advisory committees for the purpose of conducting Large Project Review consultations as well as receiving, reviewing, and commenting on applications for special permits and variances to be heard by the Planning Board or Board of Zoning Appeal (BZA).

In recent years, the role of the Harvard Square Advisory Committee (HSAC) has mostly involved review of Planning Board and BZA applications rather than conducting Large Project Review consultations. This is partly due to the Project Review Special Permit procedures adopted in 2001, requiring Planning Board approval of any development of at least 50,000 square feet. In addition, of the handful of major development projects reviewed in Harvard Square over the past decade or so, most have needed some form of zoning relief from either the Planning Board or BZA. The HSAC has also reviewed many applications for conditional use special permits or use variances for retail establishments (a major topic addressed by this petition and discussed further in this report).

Another task assigned to the HSAC is to comment on the use of funding contributions made where parking requirements are reduced or waived by special permit. These contributions are relatively rare, as they are required only when new construction is proposed (existing buildings are exempt from parking as-of-right) that utilizes over 80% of the allowed development on a lot. Over the past 20 years only a handful of contributions have been required, which were used for streetscape and other improvements. The Harvard Square Improvement Fund currently contains \$1,978,250 due to a recent payment made as a condition of the Abbot Building special permit.

#### *Recent Area Planning*

Beginning in 2017, the CHC has led a study committee for the Harvard Square NCD that is tasked with examining the goals, jurisdiction, and administration of the district. The study committee has drafted a report with its findings, which include revised goals, guidelines, and standards for review. The CHC hopes to submit a draft report to the Planning Board for comment early next year. As with the past NCD study, this report may lead to suggested zoning amendments and updates to the development guidelines referenced in zoning.

Around the same time that the Conservation District study began, a group of Cambridge residents filed a zoning petition called the Kroon, et al., petition, that proposed amending some of the provisions in the Harvard Square Overlay District. The Planning Board endorsed the goals expressed by the petitioners but was concerned that the petition would not effectively achieve these goals. The Board recommended adopting some, but not all, provisions of the petition related to special permit review criteria, composition of the HSAC, uses of funds in lieu of parking, formula business regulations, standards for ground floor bank and office frontage, and exemption of below-grade GFA. The petition was placed on file in February 2018 with no action by the City Council.

*Envision Cambridge*

Unlike Central Square and Kendall Square, there has not been a recent comprehensive area planning study for Harvard Square. However, the recently completed *Envision Cambridge* citywide comprehensive plan includes many recommendations and actions that are relevant to Harvard Square and other mixed-use urban centers in Cambridge. The following is a summary of some of those relevant recommendations:

- Incentivize the creation and preservation of affordable commercial space, including requiring small ground-floor commercial spaces that are aligned with business needs;
- Encourage a business climate that prioritizes local, independent businesses and enables inclusive entrepreneurship, including increasing density and use mix in targeted areas along Massachusetts Avenue to build the customer base for retail;
- Increase overall housing production, including changing zoning to enable more housing along major corridors and squares with good transit access;
- Adjust regulatory incentives and pricing of public assets like space for parking to limit unnecessary car trips and parking and to allocate public space effectively, including development impact fees proportional to a project's trip generation to support multimodal infrastructure and safety improvements;
- Adjust land use policy to support sustainable transportation choices, including reducing maximum parking requirements in key squares like Harvard and lowering parking requirements citywide;
- Increase density near transit nodes while accommodating the unique character of our squares and areas along the corridors, including eliminating minimum parking requirements for development along corridors and allowing greater density near transit nodes;
- Preserve the historical integrity and diversity of Cambridge's neighborhoods by adjusting zoning in residential districts to be compatible with prevailing patterns of development and protecting buildings in neighborhood conservation districts, and by ensuring new development reinforces and enhances the complex urban aspects of Cambridge as it has developed historically.

*Envision Cambridge* also includes specific actions meant to encourage activity on the ground floors of new buildings, particularly along mixed-use corridors, including the following:

- Allowing the maximum height of mixed-use projects with active ground floor uses to be increased in order to achieve taller ground floor spaces that better support active uses;
- Establishing development standards to promote a continuous street wall on commercial corridors;
- Establishing development standards to promote street-activating uses (such as retail) on ground floors (e.g., minimum ground-floor heights, limitations on the frontage length occupied by lobbies and other non-active uses, standards for the frontage length of individual storefronts, requirements for smaller-sized commercial or community spaces in larger buildings);
- Prohibiting parking and vehicular loading and service between buildings and the street along mixed-use corridors and in major squares;

- Requiring primary building entrances to be located on the mixed-use corridors to create visual variety and to encourage the mixing of building residents, shoppers, and passers-by on the sidewalk; and
- Establishing design guidelines for all mixed-use corridors that include provisions for activating design elements along the street wall, such as signage, awnings, frequency of entrances, and breaks in the building façade.

*Envision Cambridge* also recommends revising the development review process to be more transparent to developers and the public while striving for high-quality design. This includes updating area- and neighborhood-specific design guidelines to ensure that the urban design outcomes of new development complement the neighborhood context while also creating a more predictable review process for stakeholders and developers.

### **Comments on Proposed Changes**

The petition proposes changes throughout Section 20.500, including modifications of existing provisions as well as the addition of new provisions. These provisions are detailed below and are grouped in the four categories identified above.

#### *Development Review Procedures*

The first change proposed by the petition is to include supporting local businesses as one of the purposes of the HSAC, which reflects community objectives and concerns raised in recent years. Specifically, the petition proposes a goal of achieving “a seventy percent local and non-formula retail experience throughout the district,” which roughly represents the current proportion of local businesses within the Harvard Square commercial area. Articulating district objectives in zoning is always helpful; however, in this case, it is complicated by the fact that zoning does not regulate businesses based on their owner/operator, but can regulate the characteristics of the land use and the design and development of buildings. It may be better to approach this objective by articulating a desire for a diverse and dynamic retail environment that promotes the unique historic character of Harvard Square and avoids creating a generic retail experience.

The petition also proposes requiring the HSAC to meet on a monthly basis “or with as much frequency as is deemed required.” The HSAC currently meets on an as-needed basis and has met four times in 2019, three times in 2018, and nine times in 2017. On average, one to two cases are reviewed at each meeting. Requiring monthly meetings may not be necessary to carry out the purpose of the HSAC and could impose a burden on members.

Other proposed changes largely focus on the HSAC membership, which is reduced to 11 members from 13. These changes both broaden and specify the types of members to include specific groups like non-formula business owners (the HSAC membership currently has some retail business owners) and commercial property owners (also currently represented) as well as subject-area experts like attorneys, urban planners, and architectural historians. Instead of referring to an institutional property owner, the petition specifically identifies a member from Harvard University.

The zoning petition would also change the qualifying criteria for residents on the committee. The current membership is structured so that there is one resident from each of the five surrounding neighborhoods; the proposed petition would allow four residents from within half a mile of the HSOD without other limitations, with an additional member associated with the Harvard Square Neighborhood Association or a registered neighborhood group. It should be noted that there is no official registration process for neighborhood groups; such groups are usually independent from the City, and CDD only posts contact information on its web site for any group that requests such recognition. One recent issue with the HSAC is that it has been difficult to fill some positions based on the strict requirements for neighborhood distribution. Making the requirements more flexible could make it easier to fill positions but given the differences in resident demographics and population density, these changes could lead to uneven neighborhood representation.

Overall, changes to the makeup and procedures of the HSAC can be made if desired, but it is worth remembering that the role of the HSAC is to provide advisory opinions and it is important for volunteers to feel that participation is worth their time. The challenge with advisory committees is to provide enough guidance to achieve the desired representation, but also not to be so inflexible or burdensome that potential members are unlikely to volunteer – an effect that can unintentionally lead to less diversity.

#### *Parking and Loading Requirements*

The petition proposes a significant change to parking and loading provisions in Section 20.54.4, which allow the Planning Board to waive parking and loading requirements through a special permit if development meets certain criteria. Under current zoning, to receive such a waiver the development must utilize less than 80% of the allowed development on a lot, or else the developer is required to make a cash contribution to the Harvard Square Improvement Fund equivalent to 50% of the construction cost of the off-street parking spaces that are waived. The Fund is used by the City to pay for capital projects related to public parking, open space, historic preservation, and transit-related public realm improvements. In 2018, the City conducted an analysis and estimated an average construction cost of \$96,500 per parking space, so the required payment is \$48,250 per waived off-street parking space when this provision is in effect.

The proposed zoning largely maintains the current provisions but eliminates the requirement for a financial contribution when more than 80% of allowed GFA is used. This change would bring the provisions closer to Section 6.35.1, which allows a citywide reduction or waiver of required parking by special permit based on an analysis of the anticipated parking demand and alternative parking options. No prescriptive payments are required, but special permits may include conditions recommended by the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department to mitigate the impacts of parking demand, such as investment in transportation demand management (TDM) programs, securing off-site parking, or other requirements. While allowing flexibility in meeting parking and loading requirements is consistent with area and citywide planning objectives, the petition does not specify any transportation-related mitigation or alternative ways that applicants can offset their impacts on parking, street, and curb demand in Harvard Square. Also, the petition would retain existing base minimum parking requirements that are higher than in Kendall Square and Central Square, where they were reduced.

*Height and Density*

FAR Limits

The chart below summarizes the current limitations on floor area ratio (FAR) and building height within each base zoning district of the HSOD, as modified by the special provisions of the HSOD.

<b>Base District</b>	<b>Max. FAR (residential)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Max. FAR (non-residential)</b>	<b>Max. Height (as-of-right)</b>	<b>Max. Height (special Permit)</b>
<b>Business B (BB)</b>	3.00 ( <i>current</i> ) 4.00 ( <i>proposed</i> )	4.00	60 feet	80 feet <sup>2</sup>
<b>Office 3 (O-3)</b>	3.00	3.00	60 feet	80 feet <sup>2</sup>
<b>Office 2 (O-2)</b>	2.00	2.00	60 feet	70/80 feet <sup>2,3</sup>
<b>Residence C-3 (C-3)</b>	3.00	3.00	60 feet	80 feet <sup>2</sup>
<b>Residence C-2 (C-2)</b>	1.75	1.75	60 feet	80 feet <sup>2</sup>
<b>Residence C-2B (C-2B)</b>	1.75	1.75	45 feet	N/A
<b>Residence C-1 (C-1)</b>	0.75	0.75	35 feet	N/A
<b>Business A (BA)</b>	1.75	1.00	35/45 feet <sup>3</sup>	N/A

<sup>1</sup> Inclusionary Housing provisions allow a 30% FAR increase for developments with at least 20% Affordable Units, which is required for developments of at least 10 units or 10,000 square feet of residential use.

<sup>2</sup> Applicants may request a Special Permit from the Planning Board to increase the height to 80 feet if there is a 10-foot setback and a 45-degree sky exposure plane above 60 feet.

<sup>3</sup> For the O-2 and BA districts, the first number is for non-residential uses, the second number is for residential uses.

The petition would increase the maximum FAR for residential development in the Business B district from 3.00 to 4.00 to be consistent with the maximum FAR established for non-residential development. The maximum residential FAR in Central Square was similarly increased through a zoning petition in 2017, and the FAR limit of 4.0 is comparable to the maximum residential FAR in higher-density areas such as Kendall Square. The base zoning for the Business B district is a FAR of 2.75 for non-residential uses and 3.00 for residential uses.

One of the most substantial proposed changes would allow the FAR for any use to be increased, without any explicit limitation, by special permit from the Planning Board provided that the use and design comply with the area guidelines. In such cases, the development scale and density would only be limited by the existing height and setback controls, which can also be modified by special permit based on overall conformance with the development objectives for the area. This kind of unrestrictive FAR provision does not exist elsewhere in the Zoning Ordinance, though there has been discussion of zoning approaches that would limit development primarily based on height rather than density. The result of this proposal is that within most of the HSOD, virtually any construction within a height limit of 80 feet (about 6-7 stories above grade for typical residential or commercial construction, not including

basement space) could be permitted if it adheres to the step-back standards and is found by the Planning Board to be in conformance with the design objectives for the area.

This change could have significant effects on the character of new development in Harvard Square. Under current zoning, FAR is the most limiting factor for development since setbacks and height can be adjusted by special permit to create a reasonable building envelope for the limited FAR. Developers are also able to exempt basement space from GFA calculations and waive parking and loading requirements to maximize the development potential of a lot. For example, the Abbot Building project (PB-334) sought a special permit to increase the height to about 65.5 feet in order to achieve the maximum FAR of 4.0, while also seeking a special permit to exempt the basement space from the GFA calculation. These waivers enabled a development that included the preservation of an historic building with a rooftop addition, as well as some demolition and new construction. The proposed redevelopment of 10 Church Street (former Harvard Square movie theater), currently before the Cambridge Historical Commission, also plans to seek a special permit to increase the height to 66'-10" to achieve the maximum FAR of 4.0 while exempting the basement from GFA calculations.

While there could be a compelling rationale to adopt a strategy that is more dimensionally-based, where the major limiting factor to development is height rather than density, it should be acknowledged that such a change could significantly change how property owners view the value of their land, particularly for high-market-value uses such as commercial office or even laboratory space. In the BB district, a change from an FAR limitation of 4.0 to only a height limitation of 80 feet could result in a roughly 50-75% increase in the amount of commercial floor area permissible on a lot, which could translate to greater market pressure to redevelop. If such a change is desirable, it is worth considering how the increase in development value could be leveraged to advance the City's policy goals beyond general conformance with area guidelines, which would be required for any development subject to review. If more sites become seen as potential redevelopment opportunities, it could also result in greater tension with preservation objectives, though the NCD process and other historic protections would remain in place.

The attached maps show the approximate existing FAR and height conditions for buildings in the HSOD, which may be helpful in assessing the potential effects of the proposed changes.

#### Retail Exemption

The petition proposes a GFA exemption for retail spaces of 1,500 square feet or less. A similar exemption was added to the Central Square Overlay District in 2017, though it is restricted to the Business B district. The reason for encouraging smaller spaces is that they tend to be more desirable to local businesses, although that is not always the case as some types of national businesses (such as mobile phone stores) might work well in smaller spaces, and some local businesses (such as restaurants) might need larger spaces. Currently, retail basements in all base districts can be exempt from GFA by special permit as long as they support the character of the neighborhood or district. If the intention is to specifically support ground-floor retail, then that should be clearly stated in the zoning text. It is also not clear if 1,500 square feet is an ideal target, given that current rental inquiries from local businesses indicate that spaces closer to 2,000 square feet may be desirable.

As with all new zoning provisions, there is a risk of unintended outcomes. Staff from the CHC have expressed concern that this provision could incentivize the division of buildings that are not in keeping with the historical character of Harvard Square. This type of provision may be more appropriate for new buildings than for existing buildings. This could be addressed by setting standards for storefront sizes in new buildings while preventing incompatible alterations of existing buildings. These standards could also reference any conditions placed on a project by the CHC through a Certificate of Appropriateness.

#### *Retail and Other Ground-Floor Commercial Establishments*

##### Expansion of Allowed Retail Uses

The HSOD contains several base zoning districts, some of which allow a broad range of retail uses and some of which prohibit retail uses even though there may be existing retail uses in those parts of Harvard Square. The current HSOD zoning allows some retail uses by special permit from the Planning Board in those office and residential districts where they are not otherwise allowed, with many limitations and conditions. Because the regulations for retail in the HSOD are layered and complex, the attached table created by CDD staff summarizes the overall effect of those regulations as they apply in different base districts. Staff also produced a similar chart summarizing how the petition might affect the overall range of retail uses allowed in different districts within the HSOD.

The petition proposes allowing all uses currently allowed in the Business B district as-of-right in any office or residential district in the HSOD, as long as the building has a main entrance on Massachusetts Avenue, Mt. Auburn Street, Harvard Street, or Bow Street. The effect of these changes would make some existing retail uses conforming where they are currently not, which would give them flexibility to expand or change their use of space. It would also incentivize the growth of existing retail areas and could provide more, potentially lower-cost options to tenants who cannot afford a location on a more prominent street. Most of these areas already contain non-conforming retail uses; however, Harvard Street is predominantly residential and institutional within the HSOD, so it is less clear whether as-of-right retail use would be appropriate there. It is also somewhat unclear how uses that are allowed only by special permit in Business B – for example, Commercial Recreation – would be treated in these locations.

In addition to allowing retail uses as-of-right along these streets, the petition proposes changes to the uses that can be allowed by Planning Board special permit in residence and office districts, authorizing uses such as restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues as well as authorizing retail uses in Office 2 and Residence C-2B districts, which cover some portions of Massachusetts Ave.

The petition would also make Fast Order Food Establishments an as-of-right use throughout the HSOD if they do not meet the definition of a Formula Business. Fast Order Food Establishments are currently allowed by special permit from the BZA in Business A and Business B base zoning districts but are prohibited from receiving a special permit to operate in base residential or office districts. These restrictions have been a concern for some time, because they have constrained opportunities for local businesses and other food-based business types. The requirements have been difficult to change because the concept of “fast food” carries the connotation of being generic, unhealthy and low quality, while the zoning definition of “Fast Order Food” includes a range of businesses serving prepared food

for quick service or take-out, including many unique, local establishments providing a range of food and beverages. A review of BZA cases in Harvard Square from 2013 to early 2019 shows that out of 18 Fast Order Food Establishment special permit cases, 9 were locally-owned business. This summary does not account for local businesses that might desire a location in Harvard Square but are not able or willing to engage in a special permit review process that might last 3-6 months or more and have an unpredictable outcome. In the past, representatives from the Harvard Square Business Association have specifically requested that the Fast Order Food Establishment special permit be removed.

#### Limitations on Certain Retail Uses

While the petition would expand the range of retail uses allowed throughout the district and thus create more opportunities for a more diverse range of retailers, it creates some exceptions for “Formula Businesses” as they were defined during the most recent zoning amendment for the Central Square Overlay District. Zoning cannot prohibit specific businesses or business owners, but can regulate the design characteristics of a use, building or site. Therefore, formula business regulations focus on characteristics of the use and design that might be considered “generic” in a way that would impact the character of the district as a whole. These standardized characteristics include signage, colors or architecture that are applied at multiple locations in many different places. Although community members tend to express a desire for unique, independent businesses in general, a Formula Business might still serve important community needs, such as providing affordable clothing, food, or family dining options.

The current petition does not prohibit Formula Businesses in the Harvard Square Overlay District; however, it would restrict them from seeking a special permit in base residential and office districts, and Fast Order Food Establishments that qualify as Formula Businesses would continue to require a special permit. This approach is different from the special permit requirement in Central Square, and it is difficult to anticipate what the overall effects would be.

#### Street Frontage Limitations

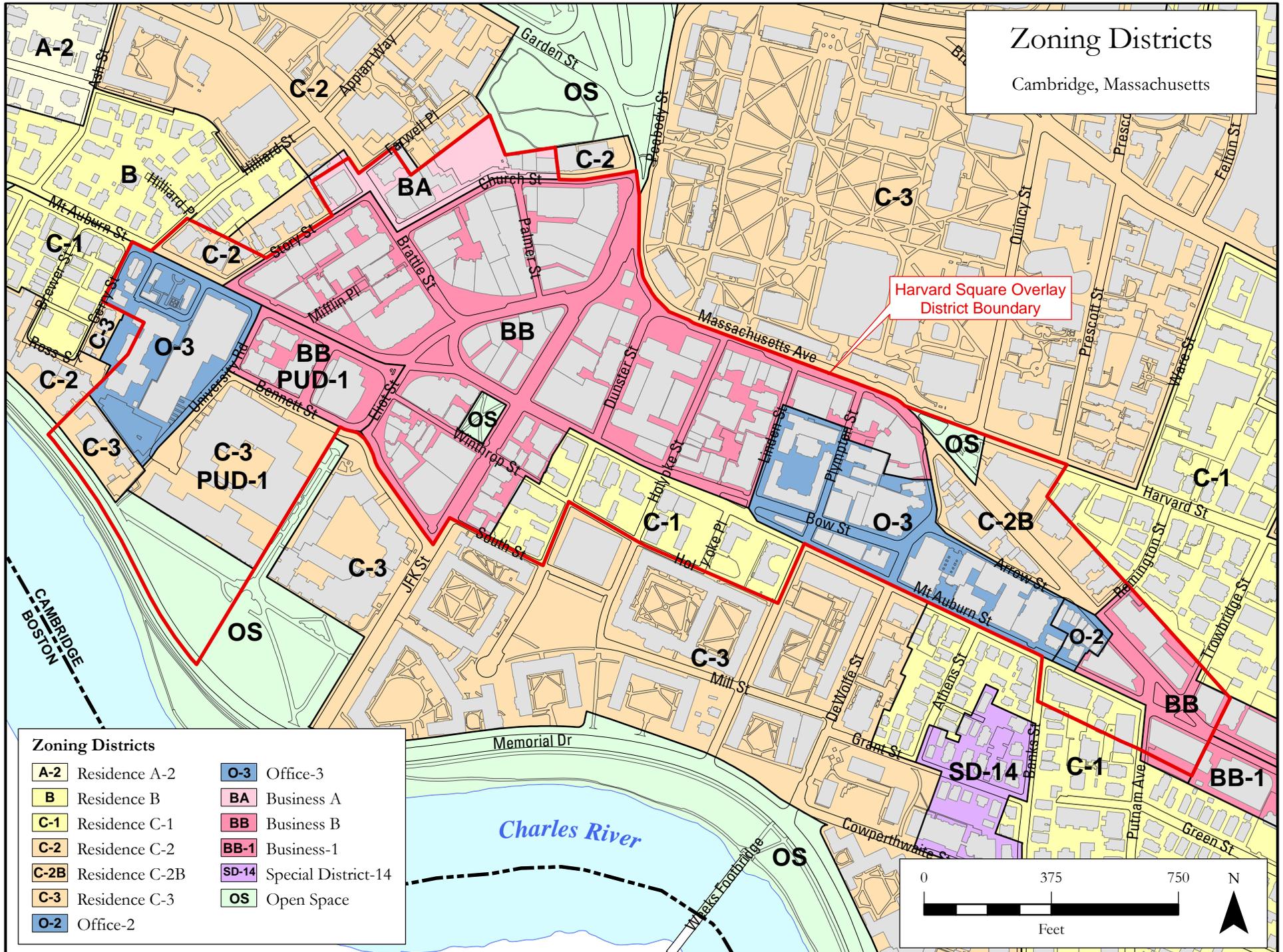
The petition proposes limiting bank and financial institutions as well as Cannabis Retail Stores from occupying more than 20 feet of building frontage and 30% of a lot’s aggregate building frontage. A similar provision exists in Central Square, except that the frontage limit is set at 25 feet and authority is given to the Planning Board to issue a special permit for applicants that seek to exceed these thresholds. Banks are often seen as less active and tend to occupy large stretches of storefronts in prominent locations. As a result, the rationale for limiting their frontage in retail corridors is to allow necessary banking functions to take place without dominating the overall character of the streetfront. Since cannabis retailers tend to have visually-opaque facades, the rationale for limiting their street frontage would be to mitigate the impact of large expanses of visually inaccessible storefronts.

As with all new zoning provisions, there is a risk of unintended outcomes. Here, there is a chance that instead of leasing space elsewhere, these businesses would choose to modify existing buildings to meet the requirements. As with the retail exemption, the CHC is concerned that property owners would artificially divide buildings in order to meet the requirement and suggests allowing flexibility in use and design for existing, historic buildings.

# Zoning Districts

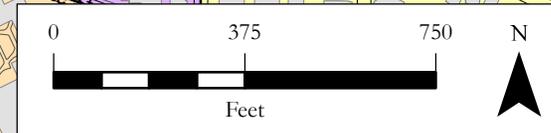
Cambridge, Massachusetts

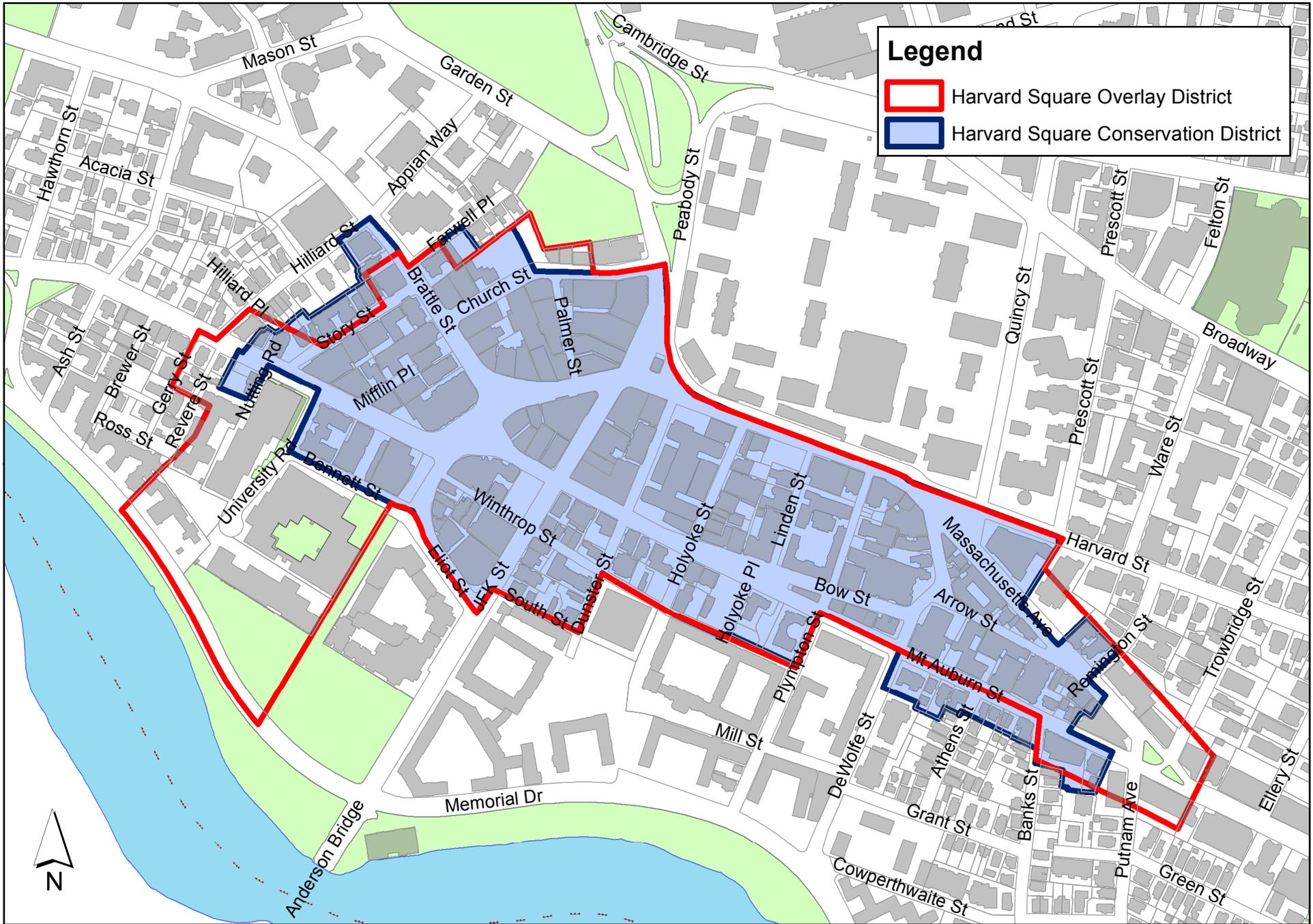
Harvard Square Overlay District Boundary



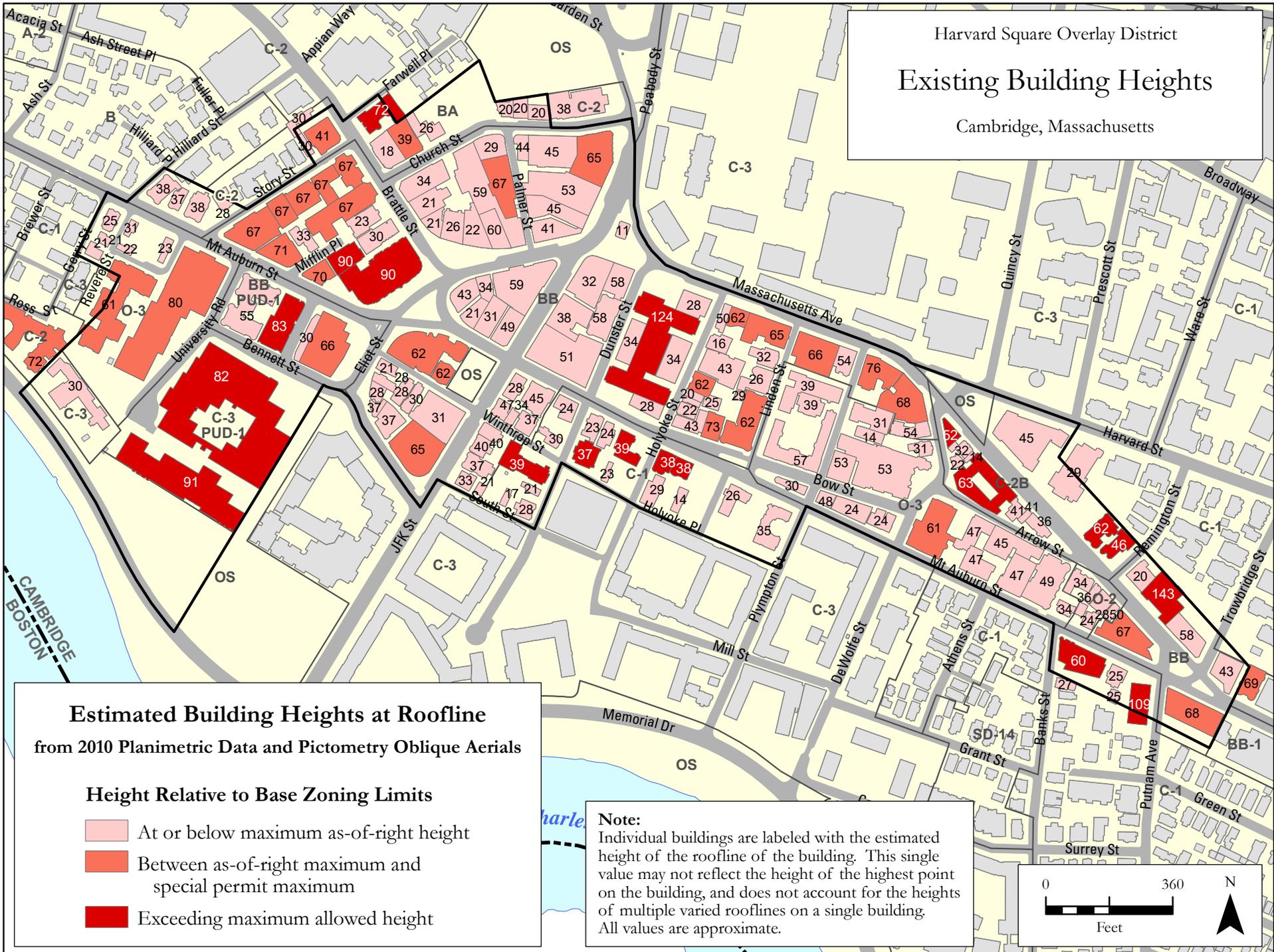
## Zoning Districts

<b>A-2</b>	Residence A-2	<b>O-3</b>	Office-3
<b>B</b>	Residence B	<b>BA</b>	Business A
<b>C-1</b>	Residence C-1	<b>BB</b>	Business B
<b>C-2</b>	Residence C-2	<b>BB-1</b>	Business-1
<b>C-2B</b>	Residence C-2B	<b>SD-14</b>	Special District-14
<b>C-3</b>	Residence C-3	<b>OS</b>	Open Space
<b>O-2</b>	Office-2		



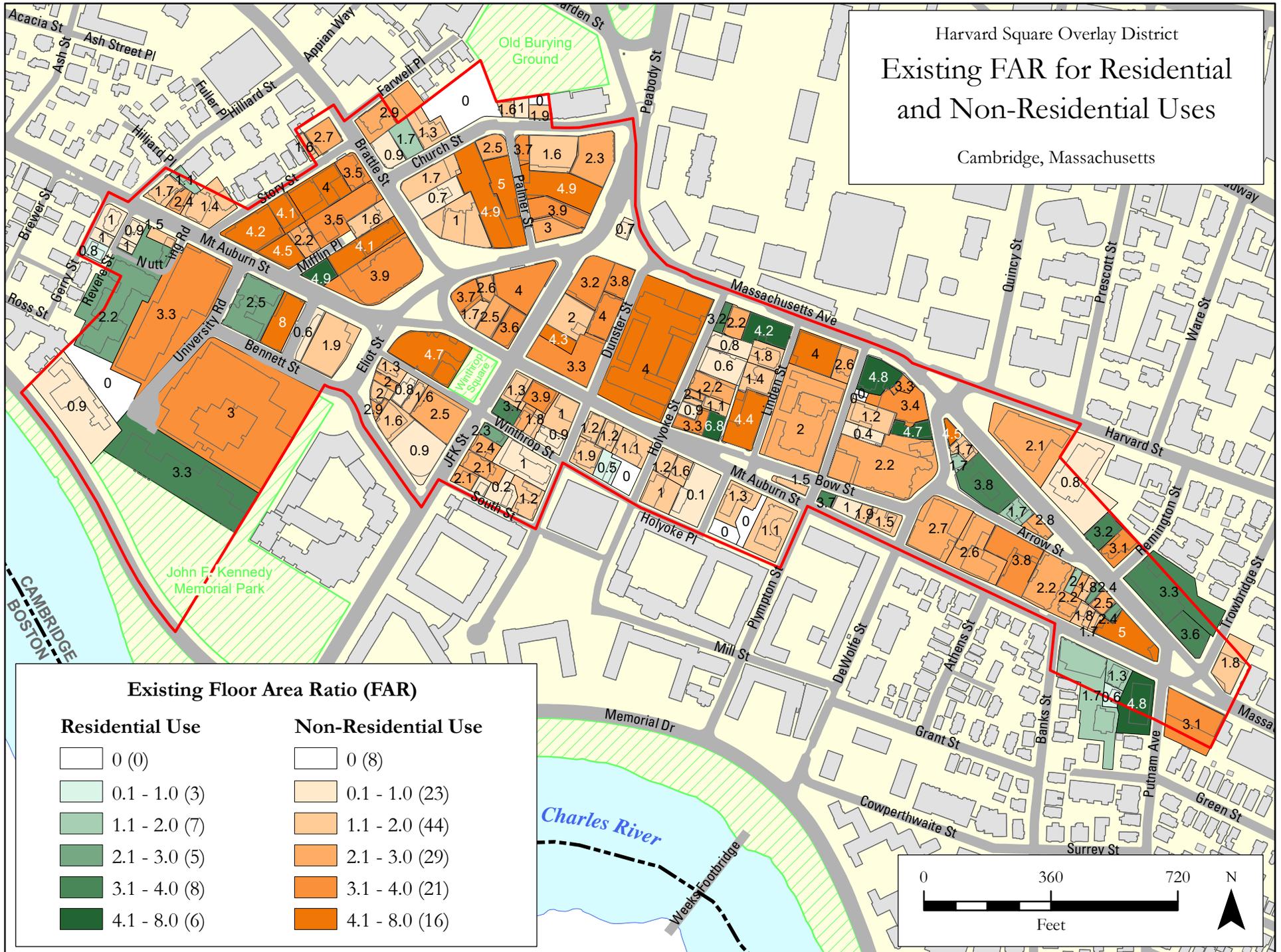


Harvard Square Overlay District  
 Existing Building Heights  
 Cambridge, Massachusetts



# Harvard Square Overlay District Existing FAR for Residential and Non-Residential Uses

Cambridge, Massachusetts



## Existing Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

### Residential Use

0 (0)
0.1 - 1.0 (3)
1.1 - 2.0 (7)
2.1 - 3.0 (5)
3.1 - 4.0 (8)
4.1 - 8.0 (6)

### Non-Residential Use

0 (8)
0.1 - 1.0 (23)
1.1 - 2.0 (44)
2.1 - 3.0 (29)
3.1 - 4.0 (21)
4.1 - 8.0 (16)

## Current HSOD Retail Use Table

Uses in Section 4.35	Base Districts							
	BB	BA	O-3	O-2	C-3	C-2	C-2B	C-1
Establishment providing convenience goods such as drug stores, food stores, tobacco, newspaper and magazine stores, variety stores, and liquor stores, provided that the establishment is located in a structure also containing retail uses, and that no establishment shall exceed two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet gross floor area. (a.1)	Yes	Yes	PB	No	PB	PB	No	PB
Store for retail sale of merchandise where all display and sales are conducted within a building or where a permit has been issued by City Council for an outdoor sale, and where no manufacturing assembly, or packaging occur on the premises, except in Industrial districts. (a.2)	Yes	Yes	PB	No	PB	PB	No	PB
Place for the manufacturing, assembly or packaging of consumer goods, provided that at least fifty (50) percent of such merchandise is sold at retail on the premises and that all display and sales are conducted within a building. (b)	Yes	SP	PB	No	PB	PB	No	PB
Barber shop, beauty shop, laundry and dry cleaning pickup agency, shoe repair, self-service laundry or other similar establishment. (c)	Yes	Yes	PB	No	PB	PB	No	PB
Hand laundry, dry cleaning or tailoring shop, provided that only nonflammable solvents are used for cleaning and not more than nine (9) persons are employed. (d)	Yes	Yes	PB	No	PB	PB	No	PB
Lunchroom, restaurant, cafeteria, provided that no alcoholic beverages are sold or consumed on the premises. (e)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Lunchroom, restaurant, cafeteria where alcoholic beverages are sold and consumed and where no dancing or entertainment is provided. (f.1)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Bar, saloon, or other establishment serving alcoholic beverages but which is not licensed to prepare or serve food and where no dancing or entertainment is provided. (f.2)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Bar or other establishment where alcoholic beverages are sold and consumed and where dancing and entertainment is provided. Dance hall or similar place of entertainment. (g)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Theatre or hall for public gatherings. (h)	Yes	SP	SP	SP	PB	PB	PB	PB
Commercial recreation. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (i)	SP	SP	PB	No	PB	PB	No	PB
Mortuary, undertaking or funeral establishment. (j)	Yes	Yes	SP	SP	No	No	No	No
Printing shop, photographer's studio. (k)	Yes	Yes	SP	SP	PB	PB	No	PB
Veterinary establishment, kennel, pet shop or similar establishment, provided that all animals are kept indoors and that no noise or odors are perceptible from adjoining lots. (l)	SP	SP	No	No	No	No	No	No
Sales place for new and used car, rental agency for autos, trailers and motorcycles, conducted entirely within a building and provided no major repairs are made. (m)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Office including display or sales space of a wholesale, jobbing or similar establishment, where not more than twenty-five (25) percent of the floor area is used for assembling, packaging, or storage of merchandise. (n)	Yes	SP	No	No	No	No	No	No
Fast Order Food Establishment. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (o)	SP	SP	No	No	No	No	No	No
Art/Craft Studio. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (q)	Yes	Yes	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Bakery, Retail. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (r)	Yes	Yes	PB	No	PB	PB	No	PB
Cannabis Retail Store. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (s)	PB	PB	No	No	No	No	No	No

### Key to Use Table:

"Yes" = allowed as-of-right

"SP" = requires special permit from BZA

"PB" = requires special permit from Planning Board

"No" = not allowed (may seek a variance from BZA)

*Note: This table is a condensed summary of base and overlay zoning provisions; refer to zoning text for details.*

Proposed HSOD Retail Use Table (see key on previous page)

Uses in Section 4.35	Base Districts in HSOD							
	BB	BA	O-3	O-2	C-3	C-2	C-2B	C-1
Establishment providing convenience goods such as drug stores, food stores, tobacco, newspaper and magazine stores, variety stores, and liquor stores, provided that the establishment is located in a structure also containing retail uses, and that no establishment shall exceed two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet gross floor area. (a.1)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Store for retail sale of merchandise where all display and sales are conducted within a building or where a permit has been issued by City Council for an outdoor sale, and where no manufacturing assembly, or packaging occur on the premises, except in Industrial districts. (a.2)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Place for the manufacturing, assembly or packaging of consumer goods, provided that at least fifty (50) percent of such merchandise is sold at retail on the premises and that all display and sales are conducted within a building. (b)	Yes	SP	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Barber shop, beauty shop, laundry and dry cleaning pickup agency, shoe repair, self-service laundry or other similar establishment. (c)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Hand laundry, dry cleaning or tailoring shop, provided that only nonflammable solvents are used for cleaning and not more than nine (9) persons are employed. (d)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Lunchroom, restaurant, cafeteria, provided that no alcoholic beverages are sold or consumed on the premises. (e)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Lunchroom, restaurant, cafeteria where alcoholic beverages are sold and consumed and where no dancing or entertainment is provided. (f.1)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Bar, saloon, or other establishment serving alcoholic beverages but which is not licensed to prepare or serve food and where no dancing or entertainment is provided. (f.2)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Bar or other establishment where alcoholic beverages are sold and consumed and where dancing and entertainment is provided. Dance hall or similar place of entertainment. (g)	Yes	No	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Theatre or hall for public gatherings. (h)	Yes	SP	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Commercial recreation. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (i)	SP	SP	PB	PB	PB	PB	PB	PB
Mortuary, undertaking or funeral establishment. (j)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>2</sup>					
Printing shop, photographer's studio. (k)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Veterinary establishment, kennel, pet shop or similar establishment, provided that all animals are kept indoors and that no noise or odors are perceptible from adjoining lots. (l)	SP	SP	No	No	No	No	No	No
Sales place for new and used car, rental agency for autos, trailers and motorcycles, conducted entirely within a building and provided no major repairs are made. (m)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>2</sup>					
Office including display or sales space of a wholesale, jobbing or similar establishment, where not more than twenty-five (25) percent of the floor area is used for assembling, packaging, or storage of merchandise. (n)	Yes	SP	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Fast Order Food Establishment. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (o)	Yes <sup>3</sup>	Yes <sup>3</sup>	Yes <sup>3</sup>	Yes <sup>3</sup>	Yes <sup>3</sup>	Yes <sup>3</sup>	Yes <sup>3</sup>	Yes <sup>3</sup>
Art/Craft Studio. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (q)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Bakery, Retail. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (r)	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>					
Cannabis Retail Store. <i>Defined in Article 2.000.</i> (s)	PB	PB	No	No	No	No	No	No

<sup>1</sup> Yes provided the structure that contains the use has a main entrance on Massachusetts Avenue, Mt. Auburn St., Harvard Street or Bow Street, otherwise allowed by Planning Board or BZA special permit unless it is a Formula Business.

<sup>2</sup> Yes provided the structure that contains the use has a main entrance on Massachusetts Avenue, Mt. Auburn St., Harvard Street or Bow Street, otherwise prohibited.

<sup>3</sup> Yes if not a Formula Business; otherwise requires a special permit or is prohibited per base zoning.

Note: This table reflects CDD staff analysis; refer to zoning petition for details.